

PLACER TIMES AND TRANSCRIPT

BY G. K. FITCH & CO.

SACRAMENTO CITY, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1851.

VOLUME I--NO. 12

California as seen from the Atlantic States.

One would suppose, at the present time, that information could be obtained in every portion of the Union, which would give a tolerably correct view of California affairs. With the thousands of returned miners, who are scattered through every neighborhood from Maine to Texas, it would seem an easy matter to gain such information respecting us, as would be reliable. Yet we see statements almost daily, which are wholly at variance with truth, in prominent journals published in the Atlantic States. As a sample, we give the following, from the Cincinnati Nonpareil:

"Without considering the elements of profit, many persons conceive large ideas of wealth which do not actually exist. The production of the California mines, is estimated for this year, at \$55,000,000. How much would this give to the 300,000 persons engaged in that State? Divide \$55,000,000 by 300,000, and we have \$183 for each person! Take their board and clothing at the rates which a living cost here, and we have not a cent over \$100, or less than is paid to a hired laborer on an Ohio farm! But because \$55,000,000 of clear gold are exported in one year, we at once exclaim—prodigious wealth! a great State, &c. &c. Money in California is not half as valuable as in the old States, because it cannot command as much of the necessities of life. A few individuals likely get rich in California, but the great body of the people, under present circumstances, are poorer than they would be had they remained at home. Large amounts have been taken thither, and many are now living on what they earned in the old States."

Taking the chances into account, there is not so much encouragement to go to California as to remain at home. Society is in perfect confusion there—life, liberty, no property are safe. Why? Because the chances of making an honest living are as small as they are driven into crime for a living. Some become desperate in the struggle for life, and rush into every species of iniquity.

The lesson we learn from this, is that men must be comfortably situated, and be able to get a living by industry that is not too severe, in order to insure virtue and order."

This quotation, although in one respect it has the appearance of fairness, is most deceptive. It gives the reader to understand that California is the poorest place in the world to make a fortune. "There is not so much encouragement to go to California as to remain at home," and this conclusion is arrived at by making an estimate of the value of gold taken from the mines in one year, and dividing it by the number of persons in the State. After deducting the expense of living, it is urged "that we have not a cent over \$100, or less than is paid to a hired laborer on an Ohio farm."

Such an estimate as this must appear somewhat forced to the thinking man, whether in California or elsewhere. The question will naturally arise—to whom belong the cities, towns, canals, and other improvements which are found upon every hand? Are not these to be considered as wealth? If one half of our population should be engaged in erecting dwellings, fencing land, constructing canals, or in various other occupations, would they not add to the permanent wealth of the State? It is not only the improvements to be made, but the estimate of what we have made, as the gold which we obtain by mining? Yet the Nonpareil in its estimate, has overlooked more than one half of the acquisitions by the two hundred thousand persons in California. It has set down nothing but the gold obtained, and even this estimate is much below the amount actually produced.

Would our friends in Ohio, in estimating the wealth obtained by the first settlers in that State, judge of it also by the expectations which were made? If so, we imagine it would compare but poorly with California. The first ten or twenty years after a State is settled, its wealth or labor is used principally in improvements. Its citizens have quite as much as they can do for the time being, without sending forth exports.

A man comfortably seated in an arm chair in Cincinnati, writing editorials, may forget that our citizens found most of California literally a wilderness, and that where cities and towns are now seen containing their thousands of inhabitants, scarce three years since their sites were unknown, a white man never having visited many of them.

If all the improvements which have been made in this State a little over two years, were fairly valued, and the amount added to the gold which has been taken from the mountains, it would show an aggregate which would surprise the writers of such articles as we have quoted. It would show a state of things unparalleled in the history of the world.

In order to show the fallacy of the estimate of the Nonpareil, we will make one. It is very generally conceded that the amount of gold produced in California during the current year, will not fall below \$70,000,000. Take 100,000 as the number of persons employed in mining, and divide the amount of gold obtained; it will give \$700 to each person.

This estimate, we imagine, is substantially correct. The gold produced is not hardly half short of the amount specified, while the number of persons actually employed in mining, cannot exceed what we have stated.

We should like to know in what other portion of the world one hundred thousand persons can earn in one year, seven hundred dollars each? Has ever such an instance occurred except in California? Would not the one fourth of such an estimate be large for any State bordering the Atlantic coast?

The error has been with our friends, in making their estimates for California, to set down every species of property as lost the moment it touches our shores—land, merchandise—yes, everything is gone. It is never presumed that any of it remains. Whereas, we have nearly all but the food and clothing which have been consumed, and the tools which have slightly deteriorated in value from use. The lumber, brick, lime, nails and glass which came from every quarter of the globe, have been put into elegant buildings. The labor which has been devoted to other than mining pursuits, is in canals, quartz machinery, furniture, houses, farms—namely, to such things which we have no time to enumerate in a newspaper article. Hardly a miner whose time has been devoted over so closely to the one pursuit, but has left his cabin which cost him time and money to rear. Hardly a miner upon our rivers but has his pile of plank for fluming, which were cut from the mountains with a whip-saw at a heavy cost of both time and money. Yet we are told "the chances of making an honest living are so small that many persons are driven into crime for a living."

As much as to say it is a country without the resources necessary to support its population.



VIEW OF DOWNIEVILLE, FORKS OF THE NORTH YUBA RIVER.

Here "old earth heaved once with mighty quakings shaken, And fierce volcanoes belched forth fire and flame!"

Such are the articles which sober men in the old States put forth to deter persons from coming to California. A country of all others in the world where the honest laborer can soonest make himself rich—where five, six, and seven dollars per day are paid to ordinary laborers—where, as we have shown, the average yield of gold to each miner employed is \$700 a year. We are told in a country like this, it is difficult to make a living. With the prices of provisions and clothing not fifty per cent. above those ranging even in Ohio, where the laborer is paid but ten or twelve dollars per month, a man must rush into crime to support himself!

The day has gone by when we must extol California in order to induce immigration. We have no fear but persons will come hither without any persuading. They will learn quite enough from returning miners to see that there is no country where labor is so well paid as here. Besides we cannot see that there is any great object for inducing immigration. The miners will certainly gain nothing by an influx of population. It will only crowd the best locations and diminish the chances of individual success.

The people of California are now doing well, and if they will but improve their time they will see an immigration quite as soon as they will be prepared to meet one. They will be too firmly settled to be injured by the overflowing tide, which it is but too apparent will soon come.

The Brisk Season.

"Ever since the flood," the merchants of Sacramento have been talking about the "good time coming," when business would revive and trade take an impulsive start. It strikes us that the delusion has been kept up long enough. In a climate like that of California, there can be no permanent season for trade. Our sea ports are open the year round for the importation of goods and exportation of home products. The miners pursue their labors alike during winter and summer. Immigration has a slight influence, it is true, upon business, but that appears to be destined to come across the Plains in summer and by the isthmus in winter, thus keeping up a general equilibrium. "Seed time and harvest" make together nine months of the year, which makes the husbandman "open for trade" in nearly all seasons. What, then, is there to make variations in trade? Why, about this: that the climate is drier during the summer and rainy in winter. This will make it much more easy to send goods to the miners in the dry season when the roads are good, than when the roads are difficult of travel—hence, just before the rains commence each year, country merchants will be likely to lay in certain kinds of goods for the winter, and as spring approaches they will again deal for good roads before re-supplying their stores. The rainy season is now at hand, and it is easy for our merchants to calculate the effect produced upon the market. There has doubtless been some slight improvement in business, but not enough to make any great account of.

The truth is, all the people in California are keeping short accounts; they do not lay in supplies of goods at one time to last them six months or a year, as in other parts of the Union. If a country merchant comes to town to make purchases, he is generally sensible enough not to buy anything that cannot be disposed of again in a very few weeks at most. Thus, there is everything to indicate that trade in this country will be very nearly alike in all seasons.

We see it stated that Edwin Forrest, the actor, has sued Thurlow Weed, editor of the Albany Evening Journal, for \$10,000 damages, on account of some publication in that paper in reference to him.

The body of a man supposed to have been murdered, was found about ten miles from Auburn on Sunday last.

THE RAINY SEASON.—At last we have fair prospects of foul weather. It rained nearly all day Saturday, and through a great portion of the night. Yesterday, the weather was unsettled, indicating a further movement of the weather.

THE STATE CAPITAL.—We learn from the San Jose Visitor, that in view of the assembling of the Legislature at that place this winter, the foundation of an addition to the State House has been laid, and a large and commodious building will be erected.

The State House at Vallecito is also nearly completed, in view of the assembling of the Legislature at that place this winter. How both buildings can be occupied, is not yet explained. We presume, however, the Senate, (that being the smaller body, it is proper to give the members the extra traveling fees, as it is presumed the new administration will be as economical as possible), will occupy the State House at San Jose, and the Assembly the other State House at Vallecito, keeping up all necessary communication through a carrier pigeon express. This will prevent the affairs of one body from interrupting proceedings in the other, while the lobby members will have the advantage of a "wild field" to operate in.

The "Third House" will probably oscillate between the two capitals, and concentrate their capital where it will most benefit the self-denying constituents of that body.

BENEFIT OF MR. THORNE AND DAUGHTER.—Of course no one of the persons of the American—his name is legion—will forget to attend the performance this evening, the last time that Mr. Thorne and family appear before a Sacramento audience, at least for months to come. The bill is such as only Thorne would have thought of—such as every one will say is just the thing, now it has been thought of. It were useless to attempt anything further. Let the reader look at the advertisement under "amusements" head, and then if he does not conclude to attend the "act," he is really a hopeless case, and he can't be talked into any place of amusement, no matter whether it is to benefit any one or not.

BRICKS.—Two hundred thousand bricks, of Sacramento manufacture, were sold at San Francisco last week at \$28 per thousand.

BOOTS, SHOES AND CLOTHING.—The present wet weather will undoubtedly have a tendency to create an advance in the price of these articles. We notice that at a large sale at auction in San Francisco on Friday last, all kinds of articles in the clothing line brought a considerable advance on former prices, and the bidding was very spirited.

FROM PLACERVILLE.—Extract from a private letter dated 6th inst. "The mines around Placerville are paying well. Most of the tunnel companies are yielding beyond their most sanguine expectations. The Placerville and South Fork Company are getting along fine. On Saturday evening the people are to have a mass meeting. A great move is being made for a division of the county. The South Fork of the American river is to be the division line, in case the project succeeds. The friends of the division will find strong opposition if our citizens cost the cost. Hundreds of miners are flocking into this place from all parts. Business of all kinds is quite brisk."

THE STOCK REPUBLICAN contradicts the report that a body of five hundred Frenchmen had organized to proceed to the Mexican state of Sonora.

CHRISTIAN THEATRE, STOCKTON.—Dr. Robinson, in company with the Lee Family, have been drawing crowded houses nightly at the Stockton theatre. The Republic is enthusiastic in its praises of the Lee Family, who, it says, have been fully appreciated at that place.

The company were to perform at Sonoma on Saturday evening.

The Augusta Age and Bath Times, two of the most influential Democratic papers in Maine, speak in high terms of the qualifications of Gen. Houston for the Presidency. The latter paper, however, hints a preference for a Western candidate—probably Judge Douglas.

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TWO MORE CLIPPER SHIPS.—The new clipper ship "Wild Pigeon," is probably now on her way from New York to California. She was built at Portsmouth, N. H., and is pronounced perfect model of a ship ever constructed. She has been built with reference to speed, and is intended for the California and China trade. Her tonnage is about 1000. It was reported that she would leave New York on or about the middle of October.

The clipper ship "Comet," was to leave New York about the 25th of September last. She is described by the New York Courier and Enquirer as unsurpassed by any ship in beauty of proportion, in symmetry, and in extensive and munificent accommodations. She is very sharp at the ends, and her bow line is hollow, similar, it is said, to the famous yacht America, now astounding by her sailing qualities the waters of old England. The following are the dimensions of the Comet:

1,836 tons custom house measurement.
217 feet 8 inches length of keel.
229 feet on deck between perpendiculars.
241 feet extreme length from stem to stern.
41 feet 4 inches breadth of beam.
22 feet 2 inches depth of hold.
Dead rise 27 inches.

The whole frame is iron braced diagonally, like the Collins steamers, and as she is constructed chiefly of iron, her strength must be immense. She sits with great lightness and beauty on the water, and shrewdness, who have pronounced upon her capabilities, give her inside of 100 days to San Francisco. From California she is intended to proceed to Canton, and from thence to take a cargo to London, which she will doubtless immediately command.

ASSAY OFFICE.—From the following paragraph which we take from the S. F. Post, it would seem that coin loss in size than fifty dollars, is soon to be issued from the assay office at San Francisco:

"Our bankers and merchants foresaw the present condition of things more than ninety days ago, and hence the unanimity with which the leading men 'on change' petitioned the Secretary of the Treasury to authorize the issue of \$20, \$10, and \$5 pieces by the Assay Office. That petition, we have good reason to believe, has been favorably considered, and we expect that the United States Assayer, Mr. Hoxworth, who has his dies ready for the emergency, will receive his instructions by the next mail. In thirty days then, we hope to see, and better than we shall see, the scarcity of small coin, to a great degree provided for, and consequently the inconvenience and demerit it has occasioned, remedied."

RECREATING.—The "Marysville Express" says that Mr. Geo. Gripper, a resident of Long Bar, met with an accident, "lacerating the tendons portion, covering the inner side of the ankle joint, and severely shattering the internal malleolus process" of which bone were removed."

A MONSTER STEAMSHIP.—Messrs. Marc & Co., of Blackwell Island, have received orders from the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co., to build the largest steamship in the world. She is to be three hundred and twenty-five feet long, propelled by four engines of twelve hundred dead horse power, and will be fifty one feet high. She will be longer than the Great Britain, and upwards of three thousand tons burthen. This monster ship is to be the first of a series of vessels about to run between Southampton and Egypt, and to perform the voyage, a distance of three thousand one hundred miles from Southampton, in less than nine days.

T. J. Hartly, clerk of Calaveras county, we learn from the Chronicle, has fled from the county, after forging scrip to a large amount. It is said that Hartly is an old offender.

The "Bloomer" is being very generally adopted at Wilmington, Del., by the ladies, as an in-door dress.

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS IN NEW LEON, &c.—The New Orleans papers of the 16th September, furnish the following interesting intelligence concerning the revolutionary movement in the State of New Leon.

The dates are from Galveston to September 11th, and from Brownsville to Sept. 10th.

The Houston Telegraph learns from a gentleman who has recently returned from the Rio Grande, that a revolutionary party had been organized in the departments of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon and Coahuila, sufficiently powerful, he thinks, to expel the Government troops and establish an independent Government in all the valley of the Rio Grande east of the Sierra Madre.

Their plans are now so well matured, that a decisive blow will probably be struck in a few weeks. A large number of volunteers from Texas have been enlisted, and large quantities of arms, ammunition and military stores have been procured to carry on the war against the central Government. Upwards of two hundred Texas volunteers were embarked near Brownsville, a few weeks since, waiting for orders from Canales and his associates. It is said that Gen. Canales and the other officers in command of the Mexican forces, are aware that the great mass of the people of those departments are opposed to the central Government, and they have intimated to the leaders of the revolutionary party, that they can offer but a feeble resistance if a respectable military force is brought to operate against them. It is also said, that Gen. Canales has actually removed a portion of his property to Brownsville, in anticipation of the success of the revolutionary party.

Carabaja is at present the ostensible commander of the revolutionary forces, but as soon as offensive operations are commenced, it is probable that Canales will take the command in person. The Americans along the Rio Grande are quite confident that this movement will be successful, as the central Government is so destitute of means that it is unable to pay the soldiers now stationed along the frontier, and they are consequently very much dissatisfied. It is believed that a large number of the government troops will join the standard of Carabaja as soon as it is discovered that the Mexican troops are not to be sent to the Rio Grande. Many of the merchants on this side of the river are willing to aid the revolutionary party, as they have suffered severely from the imposition of the Mexican Custom House officers. The trade of Brownsville, Rouse, and most of the towns on the east bank of the Rio Grande, has lately been almost ruined by the Mexican revenue officers, who have endeavored by the most tyrannical impositions to prevent Americans from trading with any of the towns or settlements in the interior.

The California Statesman of the 10th inst. says:—"We apprehend that affairs on the Mexican frontier indicate all but quiet. We have a confidential letter from an intelligent and highly respectable citizen living on this side of the line, detailing the arrangements made in Texas to succor the revolutionary cause, which shows that all the men lately mustered in the valley of the Rio Grande were not destined for Cuba. We are advised to look for news of interest in a short time."

The Brownsville Rio Bravo, gives a bad account of the state of affairs in Tamaulipas. It speaks of a letter from a young American, residing at the mines near Matamoros, in the State of Tamaulipas, bordering on the Rio Bravo, dated August 16, giving a most frightful account of the ravages committed by Texas Indians. Never before, it seems, has Mexico been invaded by such numbers as at present. The inhabitants of the country are being slaughtered by them in every direction. The whole country about the mines is now nearly deserted. Those who can get away are removing with the little remainder of their effects to this side of the river. The protection of the Mexican Government is starting these poor creatures in the face. Their crops destroyed by the drought, their cattle and flocks driven off by their invaders, presents a picture of such a nature as to induce them to seek refuge in the United States, and many have already crossed the border.

In Rock Creek, Indiana, Mrs. Drusilla Owen was held in three hundred dollars for an attempt to pour molten lead into her husband's ear while he slept. He woke up just in season to save himself. Should the wife be convicted the injured husband will probably refuse to live with her hereafter.

OUR HAVANA CORRESPONDENT.—Accounts from Washington say that no action will be taken with regard to Consul Owen, until an official report of his conduct shall have been made.

Downieville.

In the annexed engraving, Mr. Armstrong has given a very fine view of one of the most interesting places in California. Downieville is located near the source of the North Fork of the Yuba River, within a few miles of the summit of the Sierra Nevada, and near the line of the State. The country for miles around, is broken into lofty hills, covered, up to the summit, with forests of pine, and deep, rugged, irregular ravines and gulches, so completely deforming the face of nature as to render the route extremely difficult of travel—in fact, we believe the chief supplies of the town are taken from miles on pack animals. The population is variously estimated, frequently as high as 10,000 souls. Judging, by the engraving, one would not receive the impression of a largely poor and wretched place—but the miners are thickly settled within a few miles, in the ravines, among the hills, along the river banks, and in the summer months, the very foot of the city itself, where there is a fairer for miles every twenty miles of placer. No mining locality in the State has more richly rewarded the laborer in the mines during the past summer, than the subject of this sketch. The engraving exhibits one of novel sights so often seen in California, of hundreds of miners digging in the midst of a town, among modern buildings and blocking the streets with their excavations. On the outskirts, will be seen large piles of fresh earth, covering nearly the whole town plot. This substance is taken to the canals, which will be seen winding their way down from behind the hills, and washed—where water wheels are fixed or in common rockers at other places along the margin. No conception of the amount of labor expended in bringing water into most of the ravines, and along the sides of the hills, through the canals and flumes constructed of timber, can be formed, except by ocular inspection. The river, too, is the two forks which unite at this place, have been thrown into new channels, and where once the foaming current dashed along a rocky bed, now it is changed; huge piles of rocks, reservoirs of water, and dismembered piles of earth cover the original beds, while the whole scene is enlivened by the cattering of shovels, the noise of the miners' tools, the din and confusion created by the constant operation of hundreds of washers, and all the spirit and intensity of excitement characteristic of life in the gold diggings.

Located close up among the mountains, seventy or eighty miles from any river town, Downieville seems destined to be the trading point for a very wide range of mining country. The question of dividing Yuba county is beginning to be somewhat agitated, and in the event of success, the seat of justice for the new county will doubtless be at Downieville.

Financial Crises.

The last arrival from the States, brought accounts of numerous failures in New York and other Atlantic cities, up to the very day of the mercantile crises were increasing, and we have every reason to believe that at the present moment troubles exist of which our California readers have but slight conception.

For several years past a system of extravagance has been gaining upon business men generally—credits were extended—importations increased, until a pay day came. Then, as a rule, an explosion takes place.

From the financial article in the New York Herald of the 26th September, we take the following:

Wall street affairs are in a very peculiar condition, and confidence seems to be getting less and less every day. Where all this will end no one can tell. Within the past month, several heavy failures have taken place, and the names of more than a dozen others are reported. The effect of these things is bad, and must lead to extraordinary measures, and no doubt but that the heavy mercantile houses are seriously embarrassed in this affair, and find it difficult to get along from day to day. The rumors that are so freely circulated are, however, calculated to unmake the position of these concerns more uncertain, and actually cause failures which otherwise would not have occurred.

Money is in active demand, and it is seldom that a tighter market is experienced, and the most exorbitant rates of interest rule. Railroad capitalists are plenty enough in the street, and any amount can be purchased at one and a half and two per cent. per month. At this rate the floating debts of our railroad companies must be exceedingly embarrassing, and the payments of interest make serious inroads into their net revenue. Erie Railroad advances are daily negotiated at the rate of eighteen per cent. per annum. Business failures are reported, and they are particularly cautious in buying even at the greatest advance. The rates are ruinous, but they are freely submitted to.

This has been a blue day in Wall street. We have seen darker days than this; but a long continuance of these things would create a panic equal to any over experienced. There are all sorts of reports in circulation relative to the failure of banks. More than half a dozen have been named, but we cannot trace the announcement of any one to satisfactory authority. The Farmers and Merchants' Bank of New Brunswick, has not failed—except in some of this morning's papers. The rumor is that the Salisbury Bank has failed, but we have no further evidence of it than a telegraphic despatch, which is no authority at all. A day or two will settle this question. The excitement has reached such a height that banks have been named as having failed which are perfectly sound and solvent. Some of the banks of New Jersey have been named, but there is no foundation for the reports. The banks are all secured by securities deposited with the State Treasurer, for the redemption of their circulation. All the free banks of N. Jersey are good; but of the other banks of that State, there is room for doubt. We advise the public to be cautious how they touch Jersey bank bills except those established under the new banking law. The Government Stock Bank of Ann Arbor, Michigan, is considered unsafe; by certain parties in the street, but there is no right foundation for any of the rumors in circulation. Its issues are secured by a deposit of United States stocks with the State Treasurer of Michigan, and they are just as safe as it is possible to make them. It would be well enough for the public to be a little cautious a few days, until the excitement becomes allayed, in regard to bank bills, particularly the issues of the augmented banks of New Jersey, New England and Pennsylvania. The notes of the free banks of New York, New Jersey and Michigan are undoubted, and may be taken and retained without the least danger.

The bills of the People's Bank of Patterson, N. J., are selling at a heavy discount, at the dollar, and the Commercial Bank of Perth Amboy, at fifty cents on the dollar. The brokers have been buying them pretty freely at these rates. It is very probable, that the People's Bank will be as bad a failure as we have had for a long time.

Gen. Houston has been invited, and has accepted the invitation, to deliver an address on the public affairs of the country at Huntsville, Texas.

